

Governor Holden.

When Governor Holden issued his warlike proclamation against the people of Orange and Chatham counties we were among the foremost in our denunciations of the act. When he published his peace manifesto in the columns of the Raleigh Standard, overlooking his illegal assumption of authority, which he subsequently introduced for him in the Senate by Mr. Shoffner, of Alamance, admitted to have been illegal, we were among the first to give him full credit for his pacific declarations.

We endorsed his appointment of a peace messenger, though the election of the man carried with it some doubt of the honesty of his intentions. But we would not permit doubts to interfere with our determination to uphold the Governor in every conscientious effort to execute the laws of the State and protect the rights of the citizens.

We appreciated the critical condition of affairs in that particular section; the imminent danger which threatened life and property; the certain sanguinary conflicts which would inevitably have attended the sending of undisciplined and lawless troops into those counties; the evil consequences which would have resulted to the whole State. We therefore disregarded the opportunity to make political capital from what might have been a fatal error of the Governor, and gave him our hearty support in the pacific and, we trusted, patriotic and wise course which he had announced.

We abandoned party considerations to second the efforts of the Governor of North Carolina in favor of peace and order. We desired to proffer the influence of the press in support of the Executive in maintaining the supremacy, and in the equitable administration, of the laws of the State.

Our course brought upon our heads the condemnation of friends, who did not fully realize the true condition of affairs, or permitted their doubts of the purposes of Governor Holden to influence their judgments. We nevertheless hoped for the best, and were governed only by the honest intentions of our own hearts to promote the general good. We determined that our efforts should be limited only by those of the Governor himself. We resolved to go forward to meet and aid him in every honest attempt to promote the welfare of the State, even at the risk of forfeiting the good opinion of long cherished friends.

We are not among those who refuse to recognize the political situation, and scorn to acknowledge the authority of the civil officers who have been chosen to execute the laws of the State, though they have been cast to the surface by the throes of a great revolution. We have endeavored to show them respect—nay, even honor, where they have proved themselves worthy of it, though we have the utmost contempt for the means by which they have been promoted to power, and have no charity for the personal degradation which has attended their political success. We did all we could, in the sanctum and on the hustings, to defeat these men and save North Carolina from the present unfortunate condition, but submitted to the result with the best grace possible, determined to relax no effort in behalf of the State, but fully recognizing the fact that now more than ever was it necessary for every citizen to do his duty.

We therefore stand ready to-day, and will tomorrow, to do all we can to uphold the hands of the officers who have been put over us, in every just and honest attempt to promote the common weal. We will give credit where credit is due, and shall censure only when silence is wrong. It was upon this principle that we commended the action of Governor Holden in his pacific declarations in regard to the affairs of Orange and Chatham, and it gave us pleasure to do so because we would always prefer to praise rather than blame the Governor of the State. It would be a matter of infinite satisfaction to us if we could always speak of him with kindness, officially and personally. We have entertained for him respect and friendship, and regret the course which he has adopted, resulting from what source it may, which has alienated from him almost every friend he once had whose good opinion should have been "grappled with hooks of steel." In our approval of his official acts, which have been few, we have not been influenced by the recollections of a friendship which no longer exists, nor in our condemnations, which have been many, have we been governed by prejudices, which probably have arisen upon the ruins of the past. We trust—we believe, that we have been controlled by principle, by justice, by truth, and by a desire and purpose to promote the welfare of the State.

In this joyful season of peace and goodwill we wish we could conscientiously refer to the recent course of Governor Holden with approval. We wish we believed his conduct had been prompted by a desire to advance the best interests of the State. We wish, even, that he had done nothing positively bad, that he might at least, during the holidays, withhold our censure, and by our silence give hope of better things. But we cannot do so while war measures are pending in our State Legislature, while the Governor is asking the power over the lives and property of our citizens, and demands that the sacred right of *habeas corpus*, handed down from "fathers of war-proof" and consecrated by their blood, should be suspended, in violation of the Constitution, at his will and pleasure. For his peace of mind, at least, it were better that the bill should have been passed. His slumbers must be rendered hideous by the very enormity of the iniquity which is sought to be perpetrated upon the people of North Carolina. Can we hope—dare we hope, that this time for reflection—this opportune season for the growth of the better feelings of the heart—may cause

him to hesitate, and may yet save the State from the terrible consequences which will result from the attempted enforcement of such an act. God grant that tomorrow may indeed bring peace and good-will to the people of North Carolina.

CAPE FEAR AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION.

Col. S. L. FLEMING, President of the Cape Fear Agricultural Association, under the authority vested in him by the Constitution of the Association, has appointed the following gentlemen as members of the Executive Committee, viz:

Henry Nutt, S. S. Satchell, Geo. W. Williams, J. A. Engelhardt, Edward Kidd, John D. Taylor, W. L. Steele, R. K. Bryan, W. L. DeRosset, Jas. H. Chadborn.

The following officers are also *ex officio* members of the Executive Committee, viz: Vice Presidents, A. Dockery, H. T. Clark, T. S. Memory, J. S. Woodward, T. C. McIlhenny, A. A. McKoy, D. McMillan, C. O'Hagen, Alex. MacRae, J. C. McMillan, D. Marchison, T. D. McDowell, E. W. Fonville, P. E. Smith, W. S. Mullins, S. W. Cole, R. T. Fulgum and W. T. Atkinson; Recording Secretary J. C. Mann; Treasurer W. L. Smith.

The official term of these gentlemen began on the first of January, and we have no doubt but that they will bend every energy to improving the Grounds of the Association, and contribute to make the return of the Fair the great anniversary of this section. Many improvements are contemplated and needed. We have confidence in the officers that all will be done possible.

FOLLOWING the usual and pleasant custom we devote most of our space this morning to articles suitable to the day. We give below an interesting history of Christmas and the celebration attending it, for which we know our readers will thank us.

CHRISTMAS—SANTA CLAUS—KRISH KINKLE.

Santa Claus, whose traditional budget of all good things, his journey with his reindeer, and his descent down all chimneys are radiant visions of childhood, which follow us into maturity and age, has come again, and the replenished stocking, the decorated Christmas tree, and the gifts under manifold forms of surprise are making merriment of young hearts—and old hearts are happy, as has been the case on the annual return of the event for more than two thousand times before.

Christmas Day, so called from *Christi Mass*, the mass of Christ, was not celebrated on the same day by the different churches. For two or three centuries the Eastern Church kept the feast on the 6th of January, whilst the Latin Church observed it on the 25th of December.

Pope Julius I., who died A. D. 352, has usually the credit of transferring the feast from January to December 25th. He caused a formal investigation, and settled upon the day now observed for the celebration of *Pestorum Omium Metropolis*, as he styled the event. Mosheim, however, calls in question this representation, and by many good authorities the change is attributed to Pope Telephorus, who first instituted the feast, and who died A. D. 138. The point is involved in much obscurity. According to Chrysostom, the day was fixed by tradition, and not by any dogmatical decision of any Pope. About the year A. D. 527 it is known that Dionysius Exiguus, a Syrian monk, fixed upon the 25th of December, in the year of Rome 753, when Lentulus and Piso were Consuls, as the date of the birth of our Lord, and this is both the day and the year which has been followed to the present time. The best authorities in our times are very generally agreed, however, that this is neither the day nor the year in which the Saviour of mankind became incarnate, the date now generally received being April 7, the day nearly four years prior to the date we celebrate. This circumstance detracts but a little from the exalted significance of the festival. It is sufficient that this day has been fixed upon throughout all Christendom as the commemorative feast of the appearance upon earth of the Redeemer, and that it has always been regarded in the two-fold character of a holy commemoration of the birth of our Blessed Lord, and at the same time as a festival of relaxation from labor and care, of merriment and joy. In the middle ages the day was celebrated with the most splendid dramatic spectacles of that period, the scenery representing an infant attended by the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, the wise men, and surrounded by cherubs, bulls' heads, and other grotesque decorations.

It was in the middle of the thirteenth century that the custom of the shepherds at the birth of Christ arose when the common people ceased to understand Latin. In these songs the clergy, high and low, parents and children, joined, combination in the merriment of the strains of the organ, harp, guitar, and violin, each participant, if it is the night, bearing in the hand a torch. The yule-log or Christmas block was laid upon the fire, while the people sat around regaling themselves with beer. In the course of the night small parties went about from house to house, singing the simple popular ditties, full of joyful allusions to the Redeemer; and it is still the custom, during the last days preceding Christmas, for the Calabrian minstrels to descend from the mountains to Rome, singing the strains of the Virgin Mother, and their songs, under the poetical notion cheering her until the birth-time so near. Raphael, in allusions to this custom, introduces into his picture of the Nativity a shepherd playing on a sort of bag-pipe. Throughout England and the continent, and in every village, and to the bells at midnight are rung to usher in the day.

The custom of Christmas gifts has its origin in the Roman Paganism, which was instituted by Servius Tullius B. C. 550. On these festivals, celebrated at the beginning of the year, an altar was erected in every village, and to the bells upon it every man, woman, and child was expected to contribute a coin. Aubrey speaks of a spot, in which Roman coins were found, and supposed to be one of these Paganian vessels. The Christmas *loz* naturally arose from this Pagan Year's gift.

The custom of decking houses and churches with evergreens is derived from the practice of the ancient Druids. Ivy, mistletoe, holly, rosemary, bay, and laurel are the favorite trimmings. It was an old belief that yew sprigs sheltered themselves in evergreens, and that the yew sprigs were the heads, and hence the phrases "kiss under the rose," and "whisper under the mistletoe." Holly and ivy in England, as in this country, are the favorite evergreens,

though the windows of the chapels of the two great English universities are decked with laurel. It is also one of the traditions that during the evergreen Christmas day, certain vineyards of the Holy Land assumed their vernal robes, and even the withered roses of Jericho became fresh and beautiful. In the middle ages it was a popular idea that during Christmas eve certain apple trees bloomed and bore fruit. To give to this faith a visible form, the evergreen must now lend its crown, and bear golden apples amid the fragrant lustre of wax tapers, that illumine the gifts intended to cheer the heart. This evergreen, with its golden apples, is the symbol of the Tree of Paradise that bore the forbidden fruit. The Christian faith imagined new apples on these trees during this sacred eve fruits of redemption. And thus the apple, through which Paradise was lost, became the token of redeeming love through which we are again reconciled to God, and again regain Paradise. This is the medieval mysticism of the apple, and the reason why we place the golden apples on the Christmas tree.

It is another of the fancies which old people still remember as the tradition of their early days, that at midnight on Christmas eve the oxen always lay on their knees, and it was added, in fact, that no person who attempted to watch the ceremony returned alive. This tradition comes from a prevalent notion of the middle ages that an ox or ass present at the Nativity fell upon their knees in the presence of the infant Jesus. The story of the ox and ass is found in the Latin poem of the fifteenth century commemorating this belief. There is also a tradition that in the churchyard of Glastonbury Abbey was a famous hawthorne, that always budded on the 24th and blossomed on the 25th of December, and that after the English Church festivals. It has not been the change from old to new style it still continued to blossom on the same day, which, after the change, was the 5th of January. Slips from this shrub are said to be preserved, which blossom still on the old style Christmas day, January 5th.

In parts of Ireland at night they used to set a piece of oats as high as they could, and place around it twelve lighted candles, with a large one, also lighted, in the center—an emblem of Christ and his twelve Apostles, as lights in the world. In Gloucestershire the sainted lady's day is celebrated with a large fire, surrounded by twelve small ones in the fields. In Staffordshire they build one fire only, an emblem of the guiding star which conducted the wise men to Bethlehem.

In Cornwall the "Yule log," or "muck," as they call it, is lighted and green grass saved from the last year, and the family gathering around indulge in games and drink to the "muck," the children being allowed to keep late hours with the children of elder growth. "Goosey dancers" go about from the villages, and make merriment, while others sing the festive songs beneath the windows, from house to house, early Christmas morning. In Cheshire, entertainments are provided these singing parties in all private houses, and all, both rich and poor, deck their houses for fourteen days, and the children sing the evergreen decorations, the budget of Santa Claus and Krish Kinkle, the Christmas tree, and their pleasant accessories. These pleasant observances are one after another dropping away, and we fear in this age we must soon see them all but the strains of distant regretful music.

It is in the Catholic churches especially that the day is commemorated in august and solemn ceremonial. Three times is mass celebrated in its most sublime and majestic manner, at midnight, at dawn, and when morning dawns, and a third time when "the sun is in the mid-air of heaven"—significant of the three births of our Lord—his birth from the Father before time began, his birth from the Immaculate Virgin at Bethlehem, and his mystic birth in the hearts of the faithful. In the Catholic churches of this city these solemn and mystic ceremonies are celebrated with much grandeur. Those only who have heard on these occasions, and the gorgeous splendors of the decorations and the other impressive features of the service, "For unto us a Child is born," and other sublime portions of Handel's glorious "Messiah," feel forth from the organ and the choir above the kneeling worshippers, are able to appreciate the grandeur of the occasion.

One of the grandest inspirations of the Protestant Christmas is the song by Rev. Charles Wesley, a younger brother of the celebrated John Wesley, and which commences and closes with the following stanza:

Hark, the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!

A PLEASANT CHRISTMAS STORY.

THE FRIENDLY SPRITE.

"Married indeed! Married!" And just to impress on his own mind the opportunity of the thing, he said it again, "Married! Well, I'm sure I want next."

The speaker was Mr. Benjamin Bradbury, the eminent building contractor, and he was sitting in his study, looking at the portrait of his only daughter, who was sitting at her desk, in his private sanctum late on the evening of the 24th of December, in the year 1880.

Mr. Bradbury had been looking over his portfolio of plans, and he was thinking of the last twelve months' hard work, and he was feeling very tired, and he was feeling very lonely, and he was feeling very sad, and he was feeling very old, and he was feeling very much alone.

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one hundred and fifty ducats for the dowry of the poor shoemaker's youngest daughter.

The meaning of this legend is, that a beneficent Providence watches over and takes care of the poor who are honest, religious, and truthful. The tradition runs that since that time St. Nicholas pays a visit every Christmas night to all whom he thinks worthy of his favors. He is known altogether by the name—*Santa Claus*.

In Germany and other Northern European countries, the traditional benefactor of the children, with his Christmas budget for the good children's stockings, is known as

KRISH KINKLE, a name—*Christ-kindel*—Christ-Infant—understood to be derived from the circumstance that a representation of the Infant Saviour in the manger formed a part of their Christmas decoration. Bad children, instead of the sugar-plums from Krish Kinkle, find in their stockings "the birchen rod" from Felschulke.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

is also derived from the German and other Protestant districts in the North of Europe. The first forming of the Christmas tree in England is believed to have been done by a German in the household of Queen Caroline, wife of George IV., and who saw how happy Christmas trees after her marriage in 1795. The Germans of Pennsylvania brought their *Touffentee* of the bed, Krish Kinkle, the Christmas tree—at an early period into that State, while Santa Claus came with the Hollanders into New York. In New England, where the Puritanic prejudices against the English Christmas customs were very strong, the English Christmas tree was introduced by a German in the household of Queen Caroline, wife of George IV., and who saw how happy Christmas trees after her marriage in 1795.

Bradbury's first feeling, after he had once recovered from a shock of his visitor's unexpected appearance, was in dread of Mrs. B. (who, as a person of right propriety and a fine flow of language, should come in unawares, and find him in the company of such a lady with extraordinary strict petticoats. But on reflection, remembering that his wife had been in bed for at least an hour and a half, and was probably sound asleep, he took courage.

"Why not, ma'am?" said Mr. Bradbury, passing his fingers through his stubby hair—"why not? Because—because—its ridiculous!"

"But why is it ridiculous, Mr. Bradbury?" said the visitor.

"Of course it's ridiculous. Kate's too young, for one thing. Why, it's only the other day since the child came home from school, and she won't be twenty-one for four months yet."

"Youth is a fault that mends itself. She'll soon get over that. What's the next reason, sir, if you please?"

"The next reason is that young Wilson has no money, or next to none; and a very good reason it is."

"So it is, decidedly. How much has he got?"

"About four hundred a year from his business and a hundred of private property, according to what he told me this morning."

"Very good, Mr. Bradbury. What's the next reason?"

"He's indeed! I think that's quite enough without anything else."

"You have no personal objection to him, then? He is not dissipated or anything of that sort?"

"On the contrary, I believe he is a steady, hard-working young fellow. I have nothing against him in that way."

"Very good," said the visitor. "Now, Benjamin Bradbury, listen to me. I've known you ever since you were a boy."

"You've known—what?" exclaimed Mr. Bradbury in amazement.

"Ever since you were a boy yes, and a good many people older than you."

"You've known me ever since I was a boy? Why, you're not more than—"

Here Mr. Bradbury stopped short, not feeling sure whether sixteen or six would be the right number to say.

"Don't interrupt, sir; we'll say ever since you were a young man, if it suits you better; and to prove it I'll show you your portrait as you were then."

As she spoke she touched with her hand an old case which was lying on the table and which encased a miniature.

"Open it," said the visitor.

Bradbury took the case with a slight inward chuckle, knowing as he thought, that the portrait was that of a deceased member of his family. However, on opening the lid, to his astonishment, he found Mrs. B. had disappeared, and had given place to a life-like representation of himself forty-five years younger. Few would have recognized the wrinkled, grizzled Bradbury of to-day in the curly-haired young fellow full of life and merriment, which the portrait represented, but Bradbury did.

"Bless my soul," said he, "so it is! 'Twas my world I wasn't a bad looking fellow in those days."

And Bradbury pulled up his shirt collar and put his fingers through his hair, with a sort of paternal pride in his younger self.

"Yes, Benjamin Bradbury, you were a better looking man in those days, as you say—and a better hearted one in the bargain, I fancy. If you had but one loaf, in ten days, you would give away half to any one who needed it more."

ment. By way of making a beginning, Bradbury pulled out of the corner a bundle of old letters, and untied a faded green ribbon, with which they were bound, and as he did so, with the one subject still uppermost in his mind, he made the exclamation above mentioned. It was not addressed to any one, seeing that there was no body there; and therefore Mr. Bradbury naturally felt surprised when a silvery voice replied:

"Married, Mr. Bradbury?—certainly, and why not?"

At the same moment there was a flutter among the old letters in Bradbury's hand; and from an envelope somewhat larger than the rest, emerged a lady of most dazzling appearance. She was decidedly diminutive, being of only about six inches stature, but of admirable symmetry. She wore a garment of gossamer texture, the skirts of which distended in the most approved ballet fashion, were looped up with ruby hearts, connected with true lovers' knots, and in white satin ribbon, and her wealth was of similar material. This angelic being tripped lightly from the open envelope to Mr. Bradbury's table; and there, after a coquettish dance, seated herself on the closed lid of a big inkstand, and arranged the folds of her drapery with feminine exactness.

"Why shouldn't they be married, my dear sir?"

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"So I would," said Bradbury. "What a donkey I must have been! But I know better now."

"No you don't, Benjamin Bradbury; you don't know better now; you have got to be selfish, and to keep all you can get, and let the needy go without; but you don't know better. Do people like you better now than they did then, think you?"

convince you. Benjamin Bradbury, how old were you when you were married, and what was your wife's fortune?"

Bradbury thought of the second Mrs. B.—up stairs, and fancied he saw a "loopy" in the air.

"I was fifty-three, I believe, and she brought me thirty-five thousand pounds."

"Bradbury!" and the bright eyes of the sylphide were fixed on him with a threatening glance—"Bradbury, you're prevaricating! When you married your first wife, Kate, mother, you were three-and-twenty; a light-hearted lad like that portrait; and she was a good little girl, with a bright loving face for her only dowry. And you, sir, what was your income then?"

"Seven dollars a week," said Bradbury, peevishly.

"Not princely, Mr. Bradbury, but you made it enough, didn't you?"

"Ay, that we did," said Bradbury, "and were as happy as the day is long."

"You're condemning yourself, you see," said the Sprite. "This young couple are older than you and your wife were then, and have a good deal more to keep house open; and you know yourself they love each other dearly."

"Love a fiddlestick," said Bradbury, "all boy and girl nonsense."

"You're quite above that sort of thing yourself, sir, I suppose?"

"I should think I was," said Bradbury. "Very good," said the lady. "Very good. Now, do you think you would know your own hand writing?"

And she looked searchingly at Mr. Bradbury, with her head tilted, and a mischievous twinkle in her eyes, like an Old Bailey barrister who is getting a witness into a fix, and intends to bed down upon him tremendously in a minute. "Perhaps you will be kind enough to take any one of that bundle of letters, and tell me what you think of it?"

Bradbury did as he was ordered. The first paper he laid his hands upon had been enclosed in the envelope from which the sprite had emerged. It was yellow with age and sadly frayed at the edges. He opened it, and read the following: "Kate, 'sent in years long ago to his dead wife, in the happy days of their courtship. A strange sensation fluttered at Bradbury's heart, and a mist seemed to come before his eyes, as he read the long forgotten lines. They were his own, and exhibited facts in plenty, both in meter and phraseology, that they breathed a warmth and life to which his heart had long been a stranger. And Bradbury thought of one to whom those lines, rough and irregular as they were, had been the perfection of poetry; who had read them over and over again with unfeigned pleasure, till the frayed edges of the paper they were written upon, the gentle line had worn away, and he had been left alone. Alone! deprived of her whose sweet presence had cherished all loving thoughts and tender sympathies, who by her gentle influence had preserved the core of his being, and the toilsome struggle for success from effacing all noble aspirations and generous sympathies from his once warm heart."

And Bradbury remembered now, when she had gone, that the good influence had slowly faded away, and left him worldly and unfeeling, and that the good influence of his former self, his love for her child, degenerating into a vain ambition to see her well endowed with the gold which he had made his god, and then came a bitter thought of his second marriage—a marriage which had ended in misery, and which interference was the most pleasant phase. And with a sharp pain at his heart Bradbury covered his face with his hands.

"You do not scold at love now," said the Sprite. "The tears which steal through your fingers show that there is some life in your heart yet. Our Master, when Bradbury. Every one of those tears is worth a thousand of your gold coins. Learn this—you knew it once, learn it again—and cherish the truth in your heart forever—that every man who walks this earth is by the bond of common humanity linked to every other. Our Master, when he created man, ordained that none should live for himself alone. Each one is linked by cords invisible to friends, to kinsfolk, to humanity at large; and along these electric wires our sweetest pleasures come. If we are in blindness, snuff them out, these dearest pleasures shall come to him no more. The various relations and dependencies of humanity are to each one as the boughs of the parent tree. They derive their strength and sap from him, but they render as much as they receive. While the branches wave and rustle, each leaf shall catch a breath of the cool breeze, a ray of the golden sunshine, or a drop of the refreshing rain; and every genial influence thus received shall send a thrill of pleasure to his heart. But let him who has been so created, when he looks on him, and he shall be like the trunk blasted by lightning. The sun may shine and the rain may fall, but he is sensitive to their influences no longer; he shall be cold and dead at heart forever. Benjamin Bradbury, for the last half of your life such has been your conduct. You have tried to shake off all loving sympathies, and you have well succeeded. And what has your life been? Have you once known in all your life a thrill of pleasure equal to that produced in the old days by the gift of a penny in real loving charity? If you ever had the happiness of receiving a poor man's blessing, have you ever had the pleasure of seeing in your own home circle, or among those you call your friends, faces gladden or eyes grow brighter at your presence? You know that you have not. You know that in your heart you ever had the happiness of receiving a poor man's blessing, have you ever had the pleasure of seeing in your own home circle, or among those you call your friends, faces gladden or eyes grow brighter at your presence? You know that you have not. You know that in your heart you ever had the happiness of receiving a poor man's blessing, have you ever had the pleasure of seeing in your own home circle, or among those you call your friends, faces gladden or eyes grow brighter at your presence? You know that you have not. 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